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**A CALL**

TO THE

**FEMALE DIACONATE**

ISSUED BY THE

**MARY J. DREXEL HOME**

AND

**PHILADELPHIA**  
**MOTHERHOUSE OF DEACONESES**

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A call to the female  
diaconate issued by the









MARY J. DREXEL HOME AND PHILADELPHIA MUTTERHOUSE OF DIACONESSES.



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PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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PHILADELPHIA

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#### TO THE READER:

Of the many activities of the Church, none seems to be less known and more generally misunderstood than the Female Diaconate. Persons interested in this work for years, have told the writer that they know little or nothing about it. To the previous efforts of our Motherhouse, the present publication is added in the hope of giving the desired information and of creating a sincere desire among the young women of our church to consecrate themselves to the Lord in this cause.

The call for deaconesses comes to our Motherhouse from congregations, institutions and Mission Boards, but it will be impossible to enter new fields of labor before our Sisterhood has been materially increased. Our present work makes greater demands than in former years; we need more sisters for our hospitals and especially for our schools. In Germany not a few public school teachers and others of superior education are among the candidates for the Diaconate. Are the young women of our Church in this country less devoted to the Lord, less ready to consecrate their life and talents to His cause? We believe not, and trust future developments will justify this faith.

When parents begin to realize the great opportunities for their daughters in the Diaconate, and pastors rejoice to see one or more of the young women they have been permitted to train for good work in their own congregation, enter the larger field of activity, the Sisterhood will rapidly increase and by its service in institutional and congregational activities, prove a ten-fold blessing to the Church.

There are many devout and capable young women waiting for the call of the Lord to special service. Here is the call. May they respond promptly, for the King's business requires haste!

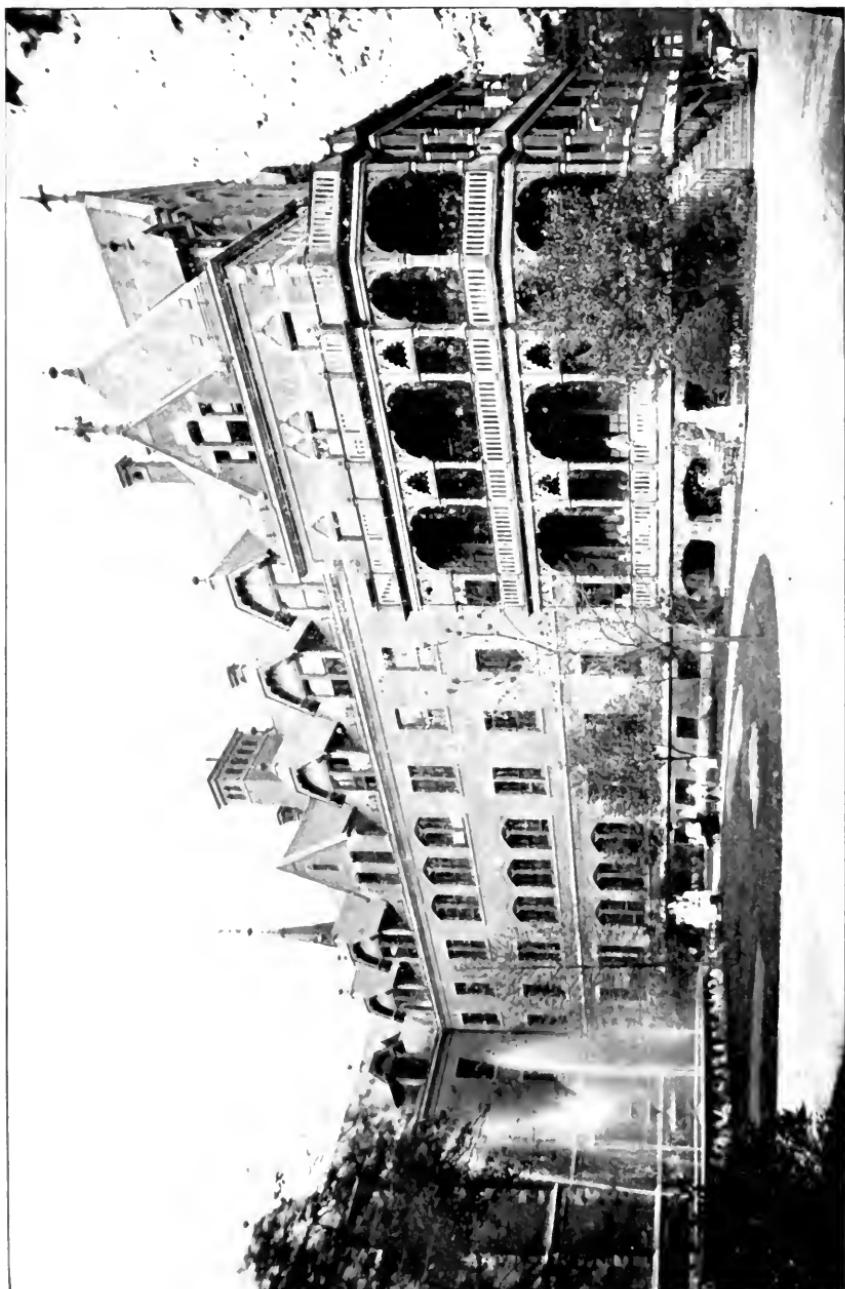
Philadelphia, Pa.

Palm Sunday, 1908.

E. F. B.

## THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS.

The Female Diaconate is one of the natural results of the development of the Church. Even apart from the Scriptural evidence of this office in Apostolic days, the setting apart of Christian women for the visiting of the poor, the nursing of the sick, the caring for the aged, and the training of the young, is fully justified and in complete harmony with the spirit of the Gospel. A church indifferent to the physical distress of her members cannot be true to her Master, who fed the hungry, healed the sick and comforted the sorrowing. The Apostles, as a matter of course, assumed the personal responsibility for the distribution of food to the needy of the congregation, until their manifold duties as spiritual leaders made it impossible to meet the situation to the satisfaction of all. "Then the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them: and said: It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6: 2-4). The office of the diaconate, to which the Seven were publicly set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands, was the result. We have no reason to doubt that this example was generally followed by the whole Church. St. Paul gives Timothy further instructions as to the qualifications of deacons (1 Tim. 3: 8-13), and even of deaconesses, if the view of some of the best Bible scholars is correct, that verse 11 refers not to the "wives" of the deacons, but simply to "women," as the Revised Version literally translates this passage. That women held such office is evident from Rom. 16: 1, where St. Paul commends to the Church at Rome: "Phebe, which is a servant (Greek: *diakonos*) of the Church which is at Cenchrea." He gives her the testimonial, that "she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." Thus Phebe, the first deaconess known by name, is in her humble ministrations a noble example to every Christian woman; and by delivering this great epistle to the Romans, has deserved the lasting gratitude of Christendom. The term "diaconate" has become the fixed designation for the ministrations of Christian love under the direction of the Church.



INNER YARD AND FOUNTAIN

## A BRIEF HISTORY.

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### IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

While the deacons became ever more prominent officials in the early Church, ultimately no longer "serving tables," the deaconesses remained within the original sphere of the office, and in many ways humbly served under the supervision of the bishop or pastor. A most interesting proof of the general adoption of the Female Diaconate by the congregations is found in an official communication by Pliny, Governor of the Roman province Bithynia, in Asia Minor, reporting to the Emperor Trajanus (A. D. 98-117) the result of his attempt to learn some real facts about this mysterious "sect," the Christians, whom he had been instructed to persecute. "In order to get at the truth of the matter," he writes, "I deemed it necessary to put to the rack two maids, called by the Christians *diaconisse*; but I was unable to get anything out of them, save a most corrupt and boundless superstition." In the "Constitutions of the Holy Apostles," parts of which date back to the third century, repeated mention is made of deaconesses, their form of consecration is given and their duties are outlined. Owing to the oriental custom of strict separation between men and women, the deaconesses were almost indispensable mediators between the women and the clergy. Chrysostom, the celebrated bishop of Constantinople (397-407), had more than one hundred deacons and forty deaconesses to assist in providing for the poor of the city. Among these forty was Olympias, a wealthy young widow of noble birth, who in order to become a deaconess, refused the Emperor's offer to give her in marriage to his nephew, a young army officer. But already the Female Diaconate began to lose ground, especially in the Western Church, where the women could freely meet their pastors. The chief cause for its final extinction, however, was the decline of the Evangelical faith in the Church and the consequent rise of monastic orders. About 1000 A. D. the Female Diaconate was a thing of the past.

## FROM THE REFORMATION TO FLIEDNER.

The Reformation of the XVI. century gave the Gospel back to the Church and thereby made the revival of this truly Evangelical office possible. Luther recognized the blessing of such consecrated service, but was too busy in other directions to seriously consider the introduction of the deaconess into the Evangelical Church. "Women who love godliness, generally have the special grace to comfort others and to soothe their pains." But he also adds: "We have not the necessary persons for such an office. Therefore, I will not trust myself to begin it until our Lord God makes real Christians." In the Reformed Church attempts were made at various times and places to re-establish this office, but with no permanent success. God has His own time for everything, and in His unsearchable wisdom He waited until the XIX. century, and selected as His chosen instrument for the revival of the Female Diaconate a humble and most zealous young pastor at Kaiserswert on the Rhine, Theodore Fliedner. The few Protestant families in this Roman Catholic town were unable to support a church; the government was already considering the advisability of dissolving this congregation; they even offered Fliedner, who received a salary of only one hundred and eighty thalers a year, and who had his widowed mother and her other children depending on him for support, another charge. In the face of these desperate circumstances, Fliedner gave evidence of his future greatness. With a faith that moves mountains he carried out his plan, and in 1823 went to Holland, even to England, to raise the funds necessary to save his congregation. Like Saul (1 Sam. 9), he found more than he had sought. His faithfulness in a matter of minor importance qualified him for one of the greatest and most blessed tasks of modern Christianity. In both countries he came in touch with men and institutions that greatly strengthened his own faith and opened his eyes to the possibilities of a faith working by love. The institutions of mercy for the care of body and soul made a lasting impression on him, that brought forth fruit a hundredfold. On his return, he directed his enthusiasm first to the study of social evils, especially to those of the prison in the neighboring city of Duesseldorf. His request to be locked up with the prisoners for a month, in order to live with them and learn by personal experience, was denied him by the authorities; but he was grateful for the privilege granted to have a religious service with them every other Sunday afternoon and meet them individually as their spiritual adviser. In June, 1826, he organized the Rhenish-Westphalian Prison Society, which still exists and has been most

successful in introducing reforms by the sincere co-operation of the Prussian king, Frederick William IV.

### PRELIMINARY STEPS.

Fliedner's prison work was merely another unconscious step towards the Female Diaconate. What can be done with discharged prisoners, especially women, who desire to lead a new life? was one of the most perplexing questions. The Prison Society resolved to found an asylum for them, but no one knew how nor where. Finally Fliedner opened his own home for this purpose. His wife nobly assisted him. She was not merely a remarkable woman, but also came into this work in a remarkable way. Fliedner had first endeavored to gain her as matron for female prisoners, but her parents protested. Later, in 1828, she became his wife, and as such was the first matron or Sister Superior of a Deaconess Motherhouse. In September, 1833, the first inmate arrived, and at the same time a friend of Fliedner's wife, Katharine Goebel, to take special charge of this work. Both moved into the little garden-house, still standing in the rear of the parsonage, a stone structure with but one room about 10 feet square, and a small attic, that could be entered only by means of a ladder from the outside. This attic was the bed-room of the ex-prisoner, who soon shared it with another girl, while the matron occupied the room below. This temporary arrangement, forced upon them by sheer necessity, has made this garden-house the cradle of the great work now carried on by that first and largest Motherhouse of Deaconesses. In 1835 another now prominent work was begun in that same house—a school for little children. To-day Kaiserswert has 54 Sisters in Kindergarten work, while 26 are helping fallen women and ex-prisoners to return to a life of virtue.

### THE FIRST MOTHERHOUSE.

By this time Fliedner was fully convinced that such works of mercy could be carried on successfully only by devoted women properly trained. Among the Mennonites in Holland he had found women belonging to the best families, elected by the Church Council of their congregation as deaconesses, assisting the sick, the poor and any others in need of counsel or aid. He at once recognized the Scriptural foundation and practical value of such an institution employing the peculiar gifts of woman. "How unjust and unwise are, therefore, the other Evangelical Churches in not assigning to their women a specific service in the care of

the female poor, sick and prisoners! How many women, widows, especially pastors' widows and older virgins, would thereby have a new and charming field opened up to them in drying the tears of misery and in reconciling fallen women to their Saviour and to the world, which without a specific call is largely forbidden them by the restrictions of womanly modesty." Thus he wrote in 1831. Others had preceded him in expressing the desire for the revival of the Female Diaconate, as Pastor Johann Adolph Kloenne in an essay published 1820, and the noble Count von der Recke Volmerstein. In 1835 the idea was heartily endorsed by Frederick William IV., who wrote: "The revival of this office has been a cherished ideal with me for many years, for I am confident that it is one of the many things which our Church communion really needs and lacks." Still no one ventured to make the beginning; but when Fliedner, after imploring in vain several men of greater prominence to undertake this work, found the issue forced upon himself, he faltered not. By an act of heroic faith he bought a large and suitable house in Kaiserswerth for 2300 thalers, though at the time he had not a penny in hand. The house was opened on October 13, 1836, as a hospital, and the first patient admitted was a Roman Catholic servant, Gertrude Reichardt, a physician's daughter, entered as the first deaconess. To-day Kaiserswerth is still at the head of all the Motherhouses, with its 1242 Sisters in 310 fields of labor in Germany and in the Orient.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of Kaiserswerth in 1861 was marked by the organization of a General Conference of Deaconess Motherhouses for friendly consultation. This realized one of Fliedner's fondest ambitions. Three years later he was permitted to enter into his rest and his reward. But this Conference still meets every three years, and now numbers 84 Motherhouses in Europe and America, and about 18,500 Sisters in more than 6650 fields of labor.

#### LOEHE'S INFLUENCE.

Of the many men of God who followed Fliedner's example, none is of greater interest to us than Wilhelm Löhe, who in 1837 became pastor at Nenndettelsau, in Bavaria. A man of deepest personal piety, of great learning, of the strictest type of Lutheranism and of broadest sympathies, he greatly enriched the Female Diaconate, when in 1854 he founded the Motherhouse at Nenndettelsau and became its first pastor. His remarkable originality made it impossible for him to simply adopt Fliedner's ideas and methods; his lofty ideals, his strict adherence to

churchly forms, his artistic temperament, his sound practical sense and his tireless energy have given to his Motherhouse a peculiar excellence that still is a source of blessing to the entire cause. Here perhaps more than elsewhere the ideal of a thorough intellectual training, with deep personal piety and absolute consecration, is approximately realized. A number of Sisters of the Mary J. Drexel Home have enjoyed some of the advantages of the training given there.

### THE LUTHERAN DEACONESS ON AMERICAN SOIL.

The first attempt to transplant the Female Diaconate to America was made by the late Rev. W. A. Passavant, D.D., one of the noblest and greatest men of the Lutheran Church in this country. He had visited Kaiserswert in 1840, and must have impressed Fliedner most favorably, for three years later this father of the modern deaconess-work came to this country with three Sisters for the hospital just founded by Dr. Passavant, and took active part in the dedicatory services on July 17, 1843. Though the growth of the Sisterhood was exceedingly slow, it is worthy of note that the first American probationer, Louise Martens, who became a Sister in 1850, remained true to her calling to the end of her life. She had been instructed and confirmed by Dr. Passavant. At the outbreak of the Civil War he went with two of his Sisters to Washington, where they labored directly under Miss Dorothy Dix, who had been authorized by the government to organize and superintend a staff of Christian nurses. Both served with distinction and were soon in charge of most important work. But after all, the Sisterhood did not prosper, and finally was almost extinct. About a year before his death (1894), Dr. Passavant made a second, and this time successful, attempt to found a Motherhouse in connection with the Passavant Hospital in Milwaukee. Here the Rev. J. F. Ohl, D.D., did pioneer work for five years. The present rector, the Rev. Herman L. Fritschel, has been in charge since 1902. The Sisterhood now has 43 members.

The Scandinavians have taken up the deaconess-work with vigor and success. The Norwegians have a Deaconess Hospital in Brooklyn, N. Y., since 1882, with 20 Sisters; a Deaconess Institute at Minneapolis, with 19 Sisters, founded in 1888; and a Deaconess Home and Hospital at Chicago since 1897, showing a most encouraging growth and now numbering 56 Sisters. The Swedish Lutherans have two Motherhouses. Rev. E. A. Fogelström founded the Immanuel Deaconess Institution at Omaha,

Neb., in 1888, and with its assistance the Rev. C. A. Hultkrans opened the Bethesda Deaconess Home and Hospital at St. Paul, Minn., in 1902. This home reports 20 Sisters, while the former, under its present pastor, P. M. Lindberg, has 35 Sisters. A Danish pastor, the Rev. F. Madsen, built a sanitarium for consumptives at Brush, Col., in 1903, in which three Danish Deaconesses are at work and which, it is hoped, will soon develop into a Motherhouse.

The General Synod has a Deaconess Home and Training School in Baltimore, Md., since 1895. It is thus far the only Motherhouse not directly connected with a hospital, but plans are under way for the erection of a large building on its excellently located and spacious grounds, that offer many possibilities in the development of the work along several lines. The Rev. C. E. Hay, D.D., is in charge of this Motherhouse and its 28 Sisters.

Thus, including our own Motherhouse, we have in this country nine Lutheran Deaconess institutions, with a total of 292 Sisters; by the investing of those candidates completing their course by Easter, 1908, the number will exceed 300.

# THE MARY J. DREXEL HOME

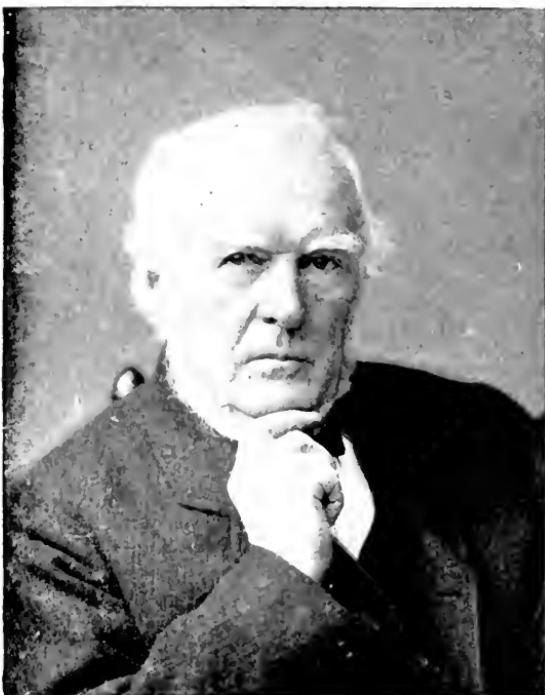
AND

## Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses.

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### AT THE GERMAN HOSPITAL.

Not the call of the Church, but the crying need of a hospital was the occasion for the introduction of Lutheran Deaconesses in Philadelphia. After repeated efforts, prominent Germans of this city had in 1860 secured a charter incorporating the "German Hospital of the City of Philadelphia." A suitable building was secured within a year, but the United States government used it as a military hospital during the war, so that the corporation could not begin its real work until the close of 1866. When in 1869 the late John D. Lankenau was elected President of the Board, that action was of the most far reaching consequences, not merely to the German Hospital, but also to the Deaconess cause in this country. More than a decade Mr. Lankenau had endeavored in vain to raise the character and spirit of the nursing staff, when he gratefully accepted the suggestion to place German Deaconesses in charge of the internal management. He knew very well that the success of this venture would depend on the co-operation of the Church, and therefore, in the fall of 1882, prevailed upon the Board of Directors to have the charter amended so that three of its members must be pastors in connection with the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania. The Revs. Dr. W. J. Mann, Dr. A. Spaeth and F. Wischan were the first clergymen elected. Thus the way was opened for Lutheran Deaconesses. President Lankenau, his friend, the German Consul of this city, Mr. Chas. H. Meyer, and even Consul Raschdan, of New York, endeavored to persuade a number of the largest Motherhouses of Germany to send Sisters to the German Hospital, but their combined efforts, even a personal visit of Consul Meyer at Kaiserswert, failed absolutely. At last, Pastor C. Ninck, of Hamburg, called attention to a small independent Sisterhood at Iserlohn, who, after considerable correspondence, consented to come



JOHN D. LANKENAU

Born in Bremen, March 18, 1817: died at Philadelphia August 30, 1901

to this country. On June 19, 1884, Sister Superior Marie Krueger arrived in Philadelphia with six other Sisters, of whom three, Sister Magdalene von Bracht, Sister Wilhelmine Dittmann and Sister Marianne Kraetzer, are still with us and in charge of important work. The early period of their labors in the hospital brought many severe trials, especially as the true purpose of deaconess-service was not at all understood and, as might be expected, because some employed in the work of the hospital thus far were unwilling to submit to the authority now vested in the Sisters. But Father Lankenau was their staunch friend and supporter, always grateful for suggestions made by the Sisters and by the clerical members of the Board. After the unavoidable changes had been made, and the deaconesses were firmly established, the hospital reached and still holds a degree of excellence in management and nursing hardly equalled by any other hospital in the city.

#### MR. LANKENAU'S MUNIFICENCE.

In February, 1885, the President appointed a special Deaconess Committee consisting of himself as president and treasurer; Consul Meyer as secretary; Rev. W. J. Mann, D.D.; Rev. A. Spaeth, D.D.; Rev. F. Wischan, Mr. J. C. File, Mr. J. H. Tilge, Mr. G. A. Schwarz and Sister Superior Marie Krueger, to further the special interests of the Deaconess-work. This committee was soon convinced that the development and permanency of the Sisterhood demanded the establishment of a regular Motherhouse. As Mr. Lankenau had already planned to build a Home for the Aged in memory of his departed wife, Mary Joanna, neé Drexel, he combined both ideas and erected on the spacious grounds he had bought for the German Hospital, opposite Girard College, the "Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses," one of the most beautiful Motherhouses ever built. The ground was broken September 20, 1886, the cornerstone was laid by Mr. Lankenau himself with appropriate ceremonies on November 11, and on the 6th of December, 1888, the magnificent building, completely furnished, was turned over to the Board of Trustees of the Motherhouse by Mr. Lankenau, who at the same time promised to make provision for its future maintenance and support. At the dedicatory services held in the beautiful chapel, the new rector, the Rev. A. Cordes, who had already entered the work on August 7, was formally installed by the Rev. Dr. Spaeth, the faithful pastor of the Sisters up to the arrival of their own rector. On that day the Sisterhood consisted of eight consecrated Deacon-

esses and 15 probationers, besides five others in training for the Swedish Motherhouse at Omaha, Neb. The first Sister Superior did not live to see this day; she died on the 30th of November, 1887, and had on May 26, 1888, been succeeded by Wanda von Oertzen, a woman of rare ability. Meanwhile, the new institution had also been placed under the management of a separate corporation, independent of the German Hospital Board, three members of which must, however, be elected members of the Drexel Home Board, as both institutions are to co-operate in the common cause of suffering humanity. During his lifetime, Mr. John D. Lankenau remained President of both institutions, spending all his time and devoting all his wealth to the interests of both alike. Bereft of wife and children, he became a father indeed to the Sisters, sparing neither effort nor money to make life pleasant for them in the midst of their labors. To this end he also built for them the large and thoroughly equipped "Villa Lankenau," at Cape May Point, N. J., that our Sisters may spend at least a part of their annual vacation at the seashore. When he closed his long and blessed life at the age of 84 and was called hence by the Lord on the 30th day of August, 1901, Mr. Lankenau was sincerely mourned by the Sisters, by his co-laborers and by all who had the privilege of knowing him. The German Hospital and the Mary J. Drexel Home and Motherhouse of Deaconesses were his sole heirs, enabling the latter thus far to carry on this work of mercy without the financial aid of the Church or of the general public. Should the development of the work in future force us to incur expenses beyond our present revenue, we are confident the Church will appreciate the blessing going forth from our institution and will render all assistance necessary.

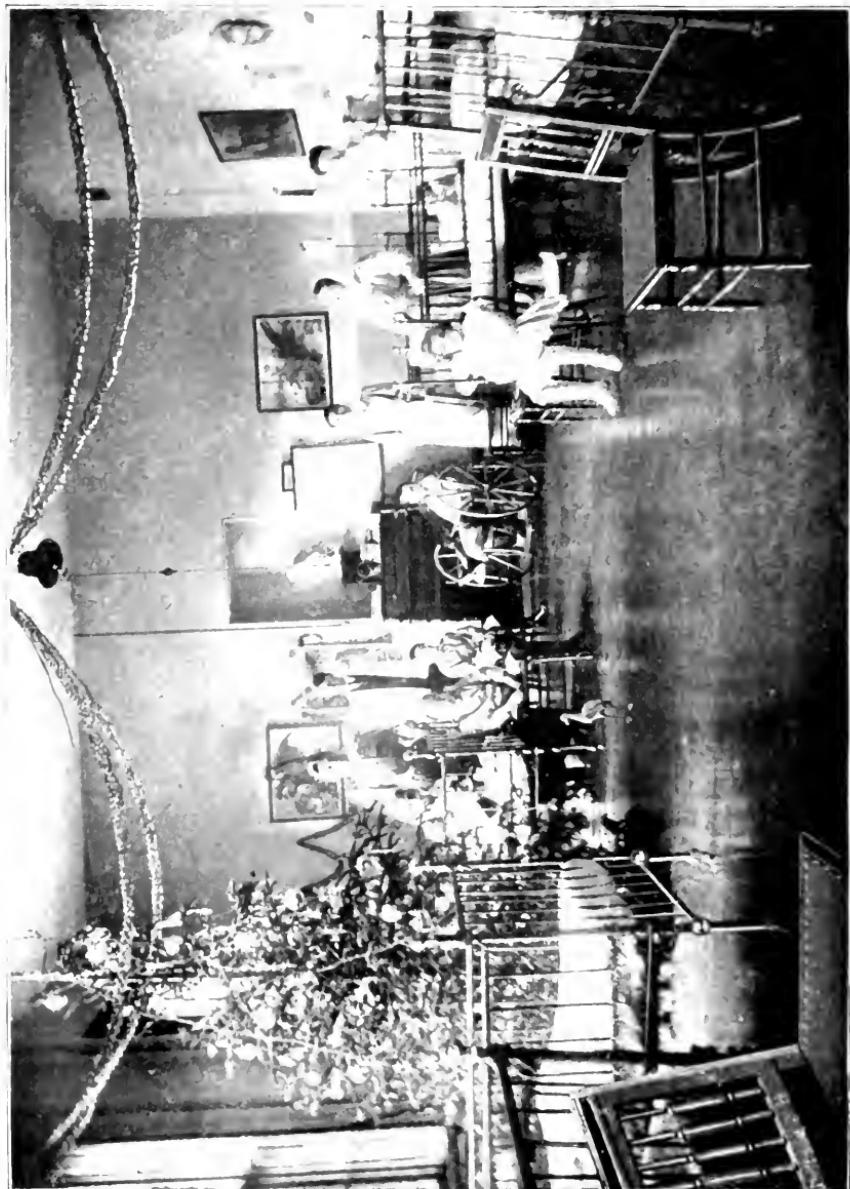
### THOSE IN CHARGE.

During the rectorate of Pastor Cordes, the broad foundations were laid for the healthful growth of the Motherhouse. The Home for the Aged, planned by Mr. Lankenau from the beginning, received its first inmates in 1889. A Children's Hospital was opened on May 15, 1890, a Girls' School on September 16, 1890, and a Kindergarten in October, 1893, all under the one roof of the Motherhouse. But to the regret of the Sisters and friends of the Home, Rector Cordes returned to Germany in 1892. The Rev. A. Blum, who had been his able assistant for more than a year, remained in charge until the Rev. Carl Goedel arrived on July 4, 1893, who successfully introduced the Kindergarten and was the promoter of the "Conference of Lutheran Deaconess

Houses in America," organized in September, 1896. During his time the Sisterhood grew from 36 to 70. But he longed to return to the Fatherland, and resigned in the Spring of 1906, leaving this country on the following 21st of July. Since August 1, 1906, the Rev. Ernst F. Bachmann has been the pastor of the Motherhouse. The present Sister Superior is Sister Magdalene Steinmann, who was inducted into her office on Whitsunday, 1901. Mr. Lankenau's able successor as President is His Honor, Judge William H. Staake, at all times closely identified with the work of the Lutheran Church, especially as Treasurer of the General Council. His wise management made it possible for our Motherhouse to purchase in March, 1908, the large triangular tract of land, with buildings, directly west of us, now used as an asylum for girls; after some changes this will be most admirably suited for the purposes of our schools, making all desirable development possible from the Kindergarten to the Academic Department.

#### NEEDED - MORE SISTERS.

We now have nine teaching Sisters, seven in the Girls' School (assisted by several salaried teachers), and two in the Kindergarten. Within the next two years our teaching force must be materially increased. *Among the many young women of our Lutheran Church who are graduates from normal schools and colleges, are there not some able and willing to consecrate their talents to the Lord in this special service?* At this writing our Sisterhood has 50 consecrated deaconesses and 18 probationers. Three candidates are just completing the regular theoretical course, and several others have been accepted for the next class. While this is encouraging, it does not meet the ever-increasing demands. These lines bring directly home to many of the young women reading them, the Lord's question and command: "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go ye also into the vineyard and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." The Lord and His Church hath need of them.



CHRISTMAS AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

## OUR WORK.

The field for the Female Diaconate is as broad as sanctified human sympathy. Nothing to counteract sin and suffering is outside of the sphere of the Deaconess, except public preaching. Her possibilities are practically unlimited, from assisting in the kitchen to the managing of a hospital or a ladies' seminary. This makes it possible to develop and employ almost every talent of any truly consecrated and willing woman. A brief survey of our work will prove that.

### IN THE MOTHERHOUSE.

In our spacious Motherhouse we have the Home for the Aged, providing for about 40 men and women, under the supervision of a Sister. Our Children's Hospital, with a daily number of 35-45, has treated more than 7500 patients. The School for Girls has at present 81 pupils in ten classes. Great things may be expected under God's blessing, when this school will have been moved to the newly-acquired property, where we will have room for at least 200 pupils and students. Our Kindergarten has about 75 pupils enrolled, and of late years has connected with it a training school for Kindergarten teachers.

### AT THE HOSPITALS.

Most of our work is, of course, outside of the Motherhouse. The German Hospital needs most of our Sisters. When you consider that about 3500 patients are admitted annually and more than 48,000 visits are made to its dispensaries by others unable to pay the fee of a regular physician, add the almost 11,000 calls a year made at the dispensary of our Children's Hospital, and you have some conception of the vast amount of suffering our Sisters help to relieve. The Easton Hospital, at Easton, Pa., is also in charge of our Sisters, who reported 733 patients last year; here the number of serious accident cases is exceptionally large. At Allegheny, Pa., our Sisters at the St. John's General Hospital nursed 1321 patients. A Home for the Aged and an Orphans' Home at Mars, Pa., belonging to the Joint Synod of Ohio, is another of our important stations.

## PARISH SISTERS.

Parish-work has always been considered the crown and glory of the Female Diaconate. To our own sorrow and to the disappointment of pastors and congregations, we have been forced by the lack of Sisters to refuse numerous requests for workers in this sphere. Thus far we have been able to spare only six Sisters for such work, and now have Deaconesses at Zion's, St. Johannis and English St. John's church in Philadelphia; at Zion's and St. John's in Easton, Pa., and at St. Paul's in New York City. Many other congregations are anxious to secure the services of a well-trained Deaconess. Most of our Sisters are glad to take up such work, though it is by no means a small task to teach a Kindergarten in the forenoon or other classes in the afternoon and employ the other half-day in visiting the aged, the infirm, the destitute, the sick, and do them any service necessary, in emergency remaining with the sick even over night. Altogether a Sister makes perhaps one thousand calls a year, besides attending the meeting of parish organizations and probably even teaching a class in Sunday-school. Any one will see at a glance what an aid such a Sister is to the busy city pastor.

## NEW FIELDS.

Two new fields of eminent usefulness were entered in 1907. In January our Sister at St. John's, Philadelphia, could move into the Luther Settlement House, conducted by the Inner Mission Society, for the purpose of bringing Christian influence to bear on the unchurched children of the neighborhood. She is at the head of the resident family of workers, and with the noble co-operation of a large volunteer force, has been able to wield an excellent influence on the more than one hundred boys and girls enrolled in the regular evening classes.

The other field is the Kensington Dispensary for the Treatment of Tuberculosis. From its very inception one of our Sisters has been connected with that work, doing what she could while still a parish Sister in a neighboring congregation; but since February, 1907, she is assigned to this work exclusively. Within the six months preceding this writing, the number of patients treated at this dispensary has increased from 63 to exactly 163, with every indication of continuing growth. This proves the sad necessity for such work in this densely populated factory district, but also the possibilities open to a truly consecrated Sister. If physicians can be found to treat patients suffer-

ing with this dread disease, why should a Christian woman shrink from assisting? Read Matthew 10:25 and 25:40.

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This wide scope of our work is an evident advantage to the Motherhouse and to the Sisters, whose special talents may thus be utilized. As a rule, assignment to preferred work is not to be expected during the years of training, unless the candidate comes to us as a specialist in nursing, in teaching or in music, in which case this special ability will receive all possible consideration.

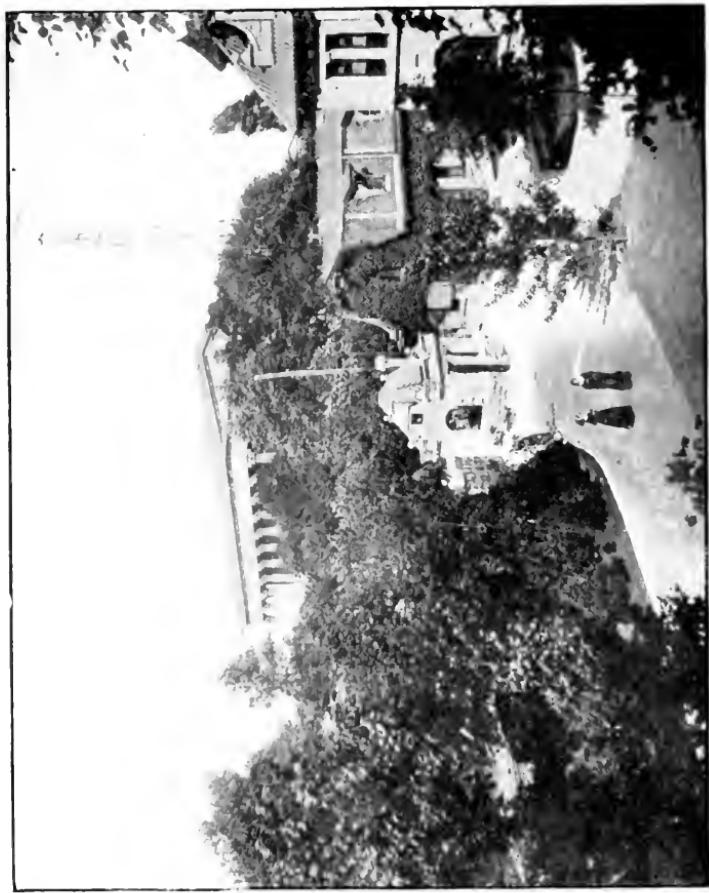
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## DESIRABLE CANDIDATES.

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### TRYING SERVICE.

Not all applicants are desirable candidates. We have no room for vague dreamers and mere sentimentalists, though they be of a religious turn of mind; our work would awaken them to bitter disappointment. We cannot admit women who have been failures in everything they ever tried and, as a last resort, are willing to make a final experiment with the Diaconate. Nor do we desire those who are tired of their present work, and would turn to us for a change and, incidentally, a home. These and similar considerations can never grant the strength and cheerfulness required in this often arduous service; the novelty will soon wear off and make it appear mere drudgery to all except such who, as Mary of old, are ready to pour their costliest ointment even over the feet of Jesus, *i. e.*, to serve with their best gifts even the humblest and lowest members of Christ. These only can be gentle with an unruly patient, or bear with the odd whims of the aged, or pray for an obstinate pupil. Even our best Sisters cannot do this without crying constantly to the Lord for strength. But these very difficulties are the means of developing true Christian character to a degree elsewhere rarely possible.



ENTRANCE TO DREXEL HOME—GATE HOUSE

## A HIGH STANDARD.

Desirable candidates are single young women or childless widows, between 18 and 30 years of age, free from direct obligations to their families. The parents' written consent is necessary. Were we to disregard this rule, we would have more Sisters, but less blessing, for "obedience is better than sacrifice." Should the parents at any time absolutely need their daughter, though already a consecrated Deaconess, she is free to return to them, either for temporary service in case of illness, or, if circumstances demand it, permanently. Parents should exercise this power in the fear of God, however, realizing that they are responsible to God Himself for their decision. We have learned of instances where parental objection has prevented young women from entering this calling and has made them unhappy for the remainder of their life. Such objections are hardly justifiable in the face of the fact that Sisters receive a most thorough religious and generally also professional training, and are better provided for in sickness and in the infirmities of age than in almost any other position in life.

A common school training is sufficient, but a higher education is an advantage. Willingness and ability to learn are essential; these will, with the educational advantages offered here, soon overcome the deficiencies of former training. The reputation of a candidate must be unblemished and her character above reproach. In her disposition the candidate should be unassuming, modest, cheerful, willing to bear with others and anxious to burden no one, ready to serve others, but asking no favors for herself. Good health and power of endurance are as necessary to this end as truly Christian sentiments.

Our Motherhouse is Lutheran and can admit only such candidates as are communicants of the Lutheran Church and members in good standing of some Lutheran congregation. Exceptions can be made only in case a candidate has a sincere desire to join the Lutheran Church independent of her relation to our Motherhouse.

## THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

Finally, the motive for entering this noble work must be grateful love to the Saviour and the desire to serve Him under the guidance and directions of our Motherhouse. Selfish interests will be a source of constant trouble. Though hidden, they are like the clay and iron feet of Nebucadnezzar's glorious image (Dan. 2), a miserable and dangerous foundation to a magnificent

superstructure, unable to withstand the shock that will surely come sooner or later. While we do not expect a candidate to be perfect in this or any other respect, we do expect her to honestly and persistently strive to attain perfection. St. Paul is our example, with his noble confession, Phil. 3 : 7-15; and Christ Himself the source of our strength, John 15 : 1-13. These passages are well worth memorizing and should be the basis of frequent meditation.

The Word of God as read every day in connection with our family worship at the breakfast table, at the Vesper service in the Chapel, and in the quiet half-hour during the day, will not fail to prove its power to the spiritual advancement of the devout. Our Sunday services, German in the morning and English in the evening, endeavor to meet the requirements of all, while the weekly Bible study and the monthly "Diakonie-Betstunde" lay the emphasis on the special needs of the Sisters. In this way, and by frequent communion services, the Means of Grace are offered as fully as only institutional life can make it possible, for a better self knowledge, for a stronger faith, an ever purer motive of service and for a closer walk with God.

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## THE COURSE OF TRAINING.

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### IN THE CLASS-ROOM.

On entering the Motherhouse, preferably between May 1 and October 1, the candidates are placed in charge of the Training Sister (Probe-Meisterin), who though their immediate superior, is much more their teacher, friend and constant adviser. She is a Sister of good judgment and mature character, attending constantly to the welfare of her class. The candidates may be assigned to practical work at once, but during the course of instruction assist only in the morning until 10 o'clock. After a quiet half-hour for devotion in the chapel, the class-work begins at 11 and continues until 5 o'clock, with an hour's intermission for dinner. The evening is devoted to preparation for the next day's

classes. Wednesday afternoon is given to recreation. The purpose of the course is twofold, intellectual training and deepening of spiritual life. If necessary, even the elementary branches, reading, writing and arithmetic, are reviewed, the last including a simple system of bookkeeping; German and English grammar are taught, as also geography, history, and the rudiments of anatomy and physiology. The religious subjects include Luther's Catechism, Bible history, Church history, Bible study, the Doctrines of the Church, and an outline of the work and development of the Diaconate. Memorizing hymns and passages from the Scriptures is also very important. The course begins in October and is concluded with an examination on the Wednesday of Holy Week. The candidates are then invested, *i. e.*, they receive the Sisters' garb at a simple service, at the same time promising obedience to the Pastor and the Sister Superior (Oberin), and the observance of the general rules of the house. Now they are "Probationers," ready to have their fitness for the Female Diaconate tested by actual service. Thus the "Course" (Kursus) is merely of a preparatory character, quickening their intellectual powers and their spiritual life for the severer tests that follow.

#### A PERIOD OF PROBATION.

Each probationer is now assigned to some specific work under the supervision of an experienced deaconess, preferably in the hospital, as no other form of work demands such close attention and gives such varied experience. She works side by side with the pupils of the Nurses' Training School of the German Hospital, and with these attends the lectures given by the doctors. While the nurses graduate at the end of their three years' course, the probationer continues at the hospital, constantly rising by her experience until she herself becomes qualified to take charge of stations and to train others. Should she be more gifted for other work, or even prove inefficient for nursing, some other sphere of usefulness will be found for her. Deaconesses are taught the truly Christian principle that no work is low and degrading; all is honorable, as Löhe is said to have so beautifully expressed it: "If God should send two angels to earth, one to rule a city, the other to sweep the streets, both would obey with equal cheerfulness, recognizing their work to be of ultimate equal importance." Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6: 3); how then dare a Christian shrink from any form of manual labor as menial? During these years of probation the Sisters gather once or twice a week for further instruction by the Pastor or the Sister Superior, as also for special Bible study, except during the Summer.

## THE CONSECRATED DEACONESS.

In the course of five or six years the probationer, as well as her superiors, have come to quite definite conclusions as to her willingness or fitness to make the Diaconate her life-work. Those not yet ready to decide, may wait one or more years longer; the others are received into the Sisterhood by consecration, usually at Pentecost. One week previous they enter a special course of instruction and meditation, all centering in the Word of God. The service of consecration is most impressive, but the Sisters even now take no vow binding them for life, but most solemnly promise to faithfully serve the Lord and submit to the directions of the Motherhouse. This latter promise is necessary to assure the successful working of the institution. No army, no force of workmen, no business house can succeed without obedience to those in authority. Disobedience was the first sin; obedience is the keynote of the life of our Saviour (Phil. 2:8), and must be that of all who would follow and serve Him. The obedience asked and the work expected of a Deaconess never exceed the absolute necessity of the case and are not more exacting than in most other useful walks of life. We must not overlook the fact that the deaconess is the "daughter" of her Motherhouse, and while she is expected to serve wherever she may be needed, she has the assurance that she is provided for under all circumstances. Worries caused by sickness or advancing age have as little place in her life as those of her dress. She wears the garb adopted by her Motherhouse, in our case quite similar to that plain and becoming style worn by townswomen in Northern Germany at the time the Female Diaconate was revived by Fliedner. Thus she is free to give her entire attention to the service of her fellowmen and to the development of her own spiritual life. Her quarterly allowance of "pin money" is sufficient to cover all her incidental expenses, and generally enables her to lay a little aside for her next vacation. If her personal interests make a long and expensive journey necessary, the Motherhouse will aid to make that possible. Her life is by no means as monotonous as some surmise. She shares the joys as well as the work of the Motherhouse, and by the Grace of God may be so happy in her calling that the thought of leaving the Sisterhood will never seriously enter her mind. She realizes her greater opportunities for useful service as for spiritual growth. She knows her life is of real value to others and is not wasted in trivial affairs, useless if not actually harmful. She is in the world, but not of the world. Yet she does not consider herself more holy than other Christian women, but looks for her salvation to Jesus Christ only. Grate-

ful for His redeeming love, she consecrates herself to His service as His handmaid, ready to die for Him if needs be. She looks for no greater reward than that the Lord might approve of her service, with the simple word: "She hath done what she could."

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## DIRECTIONS FOR APPLICANTS.

Any young woman desiring to apply for admission to our Sisterhood, should calmly and prayerfully consider the difficulties as well as the greater possibilities of the Deaconess calling, and ask the Lord for light and guidance. If convinced of the singleness of her purpose to serve the Lord in this important sphere, she should write to the Mary J. Drexel Home, 2100 South College avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., stating her intention and her probability of meeting the necessary requirements. She will then be informed when to forward the following papers: 1. A sketch of her life, written by herself; 2. A certified copy of the record of her baptism and confirmation; 3. The written consent of her parents, or if a minor, of her guardian; 4. A certificate of good health from her physician; 5. A separately sealed testimonial from her pastor. If these papers are approved, she will receive notice as to the time she may enter.



THE GERMAN HOSPITAL.









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